

## Week 1 Reading and Media Questions

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### TED Talk Video

1. What kind of ingredients did Elena Paravantes' mother use in her Greek cooking? What ingredients do you (or your family) usually use when cooking? Are they similar or different? Explain.
2. How has the diet of Greece changed over the years? Has it been for better or for worse?
3. What is the nutrition transition? How have you seen this in your own life or in the life of someone you know?
4. The Seven Countries Study is referenced in the study? Why is it important?
5. What was the role of extra virgin olive oil in the traditional Mediterranean diet? How did this affect the health of people following this diet?
6. How would you work to give credit to the diet of Crete for providing the basis of the Mediterranean diet?
7. If you were Greek or Cretan, would you be more inclined to follow the traditional Mediterranean diet or the typical American diet? Why?
8. What would you include in a Mediterranean Diet workshop if you were in charge of creating it?
9. Pick one of the key ingredients of the Mediterranean diet and research the health benefits.

### The Mediterranean diet: a view from history

1. For over 2000 years, people believed that the food they consumed was governed by four “humors”. What were these and how did they influence diet?
2. Summarize what anthropologist Sidney Minz says about humans and food.
3. This article notes that the Mediterranean diet of 20<sup>th</sup> century Italian immigrants overcame attempts to “improve” it. What strategies did they use to ensure that their food heritage was preserved? How is this related to what we now know as the Mediterranean diet?
4. The authors contend that the Mediterranean diet can be a very valuable way to overcome the traditional “diet” that is doomed to fail.
  - a. What are the markers of a prescribed diet that is likely to fail?
  - b. What does the Mediterranean diet offer that can overcome these shortcomings?

### The Mediterranean diet pyramid today

1. Why does the Mediterranean diet pyramid need to be updated?
2. Specifically, what four factors were considered by the authors when proposing recommendations for the updated pyramid?
3. Five issues have arisen that need motivated scientist to update the pyramid. In your own words, describe these issues.

4. What is the foundation (you know, the bottom) of the Mediterranean diet pyramid? Why is this important?
5. Think critically about your diet. How does your diet match up with the recommendations outlined by the pyramid?
6. This paper mentions the Seven Country Study. Using this link (<http://sevencountriesstudy.com/>), summarize this study and discuss why it is relevant to our class on the Mediterranean diet.